



Stimpson Reserve: for Generations to Come

story begins on back cover

Washington University, and the State Department of Natural Resources.

The Land Trust sold a watershed conservation easement and a recreational use easement over the donated 116 acres to Whatcom County. The Land Trust used the proceeds to add an adjoining 80 acres purchased from the Trillium Corporation and to set up a fund to develop and manage the property. Western Washington University donated two small but critically located parcels to the Land Trust, land that

had been acquired through the heroic efforts of Professor Herb Taylor. In September 2002, the Department of Natural Resources signed an agreement making the 138-acre Lake Louise Natural Resource Conservation Area a part of the Stimpson Family Nature Reserve, and turning over management of that property to Whatcom County. The County Parks and Recreation Department will be in charge of the entire 350-acre Nature Reserve.

Master trail builder Russ Pfeiffer-Hoyt has constructed a 3 mile loop trail that skirts a vibrant beaver pond and weaves through the mature forests, over sandstone ridges and beside assorted wetlands of the Reserve. When Russ builds a trail, it is not simply a way to get you from one place to another. It is an invitation to experience nature. In planning this project, the Stimpsons, the Land Trust and County Parks all agreed



photo: Rand Jack

Master trail builder Russ Pfeiffer-Hoyt discusses the new trail with Stimpson siblings Jane Bremner (far left) and Susan Trimmingham. Behind Russ is Susan's daughter Erin Trimmingham. On Erin's back is her daughter Zo. Between Erin and their mother Ina Clark, daughter-in-law of Stimpson sibling Mary Rivkin (not pictured) are Maya and Wiley Seckinger.

that this was not to be a park, but rather a Nature Reserve, a place to be quiet and experience the intricate grandeur of nature, a place for children to discover what nature is about.

On October 11 at 11 a.m., you are invited to join us there, just outside Bellingham on the Lake Louise Road immediately north of Sudden Valley. Join the celebration, say a word of

thanks to the Stimpson family (we hope all seven siblings will be there from across the country), and after the dedication be among the first to walk the trail and experience nature at its Whatcom County finest. Call the Land Trust office (650-9470) or County Parks (733-0212) for information about parking for the event.

— Rand Jack

OTHER CONTRIBUTORS TO THE NATURE RESERVE

- David Evans and Associates** – Michael Durbin and Gil Laas – parking lot design and survey
- Strider Construction** – Jeremy Strider and Kevin Zender – parking lot construction
- Cloud Mountain Farm** – Tom and Cheryl Thornton – plants and landscaping
- Eagle Scout candidate Casey Oswald and members of his troop** – construction of trail bridges
- Brooks Lumber** – lumber for bridges
- Carlson Steel** – rebar for bridges
- Hardware Sales** – nails for bridges
- Ace Rock, LLC** – crushed gravel for parking lot
- Fourth Corner Nursery** – discount on landscaping plants
- Roderick C. Burton - Art & Design** – Rod Burton – design of signs

Summer Help

Joe Peabody

Joe has continued to help out at the Whatcom Land Trust, this time as our summer intern. Joe researched funding opportunities for WLT, and helped to organize the welcome home party for the Matthews after their bike trip across the country. Joe also kept the office running smoothly while Katherine was on vacation. Joe will be serving on both the Outreach and Development Committees this fall.

Elody Samuelson

Elody helped out over the last few months by organizing and updating the Business Partner files, which turned out to be a much more challenging task than expected. WLT now has up-to-date records on each business that has participated in the program. Also a volunteer at the Whatcom Council of Governments this summer, Elody will begin the MBA (Masters in Business Administration) program at Western Washington University this fall.

New Staff Member

Daniél Morgan joins Whatcom Land Trust as Development Director

Daniél Morgan was hired this summer after Trish Navarre resigned to take a position at North Cascades Institute. Daniél started at WLT as a volunteer helping Trish exploring Business Partner prospects. When Bob Keller learned of her experience with event planning and volunteer coordination he encouraged the Board to hire Daniél to run the 2003 auction. Daniél did a fantastic job with the auction, which ran smoothly, brought in lots of money, and drew many new faces to support WLT. The Board had no difficulty offering the job of Development Director to Daniél, confident that she will do a great job.

Originally from Colorado, Daniél has a degree in Cultural Ecology from Fairhaven College, Western Washington University. In her spare time she enjoys hiking, camping, watercolor painting, and continuing her research in ecologic cosmology. She loves the sense of community in Whatcom County, and is thrilled to be working on preserving the areas that make this place so special.

Wilma Totten

“I am in awe of all the things Wilma has done in her life. Her organizational ability is a great help to Whatcom Land Trust.” — Rod Burton, Outreach Committee chair

You may have met Wilma Totten staffing the Land Trust display. She is in charge of coordinating the volunteers who staff the table, and regularly takes a shift herself. Wilma currently serves on the Outreach Committee, but her relationship with WLT goes back many years. In fact, Wilma attended that first meeting in the basement of Dutch Mothers Restaurant in Lynden in 1983 when the Land Trust was first organized! She says she went to the meeting because she did not want to see Whatcom County turn into another Issaquah, which was farmland when she lived there as



photo: Rod Burton

a child and is now almost completely paved over.

Wilma did not become heavily involved with the formation of WLT in the early 1980's because she was busy helping to form another group: The Literacy Council. She was one of the founding members of The Literacy Council, and worked there for 13 years before retiring. Since her retirement she has volunteered for the Land Trust in a variety of ways, from serving cider at the Eagle Park opening, to helping out with numerous newsletter mailings.

When asked why she volunteers at the Land Trust instead of other organizations, she replied that helping WLT was one of the most important things she could do. WLT has loved having Wilma on board because she is so reliable- if she says she will take care of something, consider it done! — Katherine Freimund

The Mission of the Whatcom Land Trust is to preserve and protect wildlife habitat, scenic, agricultural and open space lands in Whatcom County for future generations by securing interests in land and promoting land stewardship.

Newsletter Editorial Team Carl Batchelor, Rod Burton, Katherine Freimund

Design and Layout Donated by Roderick C. Burton - Art & Design

Contributors Katherine Freimund, Rand Jack, Katie Knight, John Matthews, Daniél Morgan, Joseph Peabody, Gordon Scott

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“Fund an Acre” Donations

Preserve Valuable River Habitat

Supporters of Whatcom Land Trust raised over \$5,000 at this year's *Great Outdoors Auction* for the purchase of 11 acres of pristine river habitat on the Middle Fork of the Nooksack. Each year at our annual auction there is a special section called “Fund an Acre.” In the past years the proceeds from this section have been set aside for use when special acquisition opportunities arise. This year several months before the auction we were approached by a landowner who wished to sell his



photo: Gordon Scott

The 11-acre Bajema Property is home to elk, eagles and others.

the river during the winter and at night roost just across the valley on the Van Zandt Dike. During fall and winter spawning salmon dot the river bars. The Bajema Property is a classic site for the conservation of salmon, eagle and elk. The process of protecting the Bajema property is also a good example of how Whatcom Land Trust can facilitate protection of our natural heritage by bringing together willing landowners and conservation supporters.

— Gordon Scott

— THANK YOU! to all who donated to “Fund an Acre” —

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Traverse Teams Join Together to Support WLT

On September 13, 2003, two Whatcom Land Trust teams ran, mountain biked, road biked, sea kayaked, and trekked for the 2nd annual Bellingham Traverse. The Traverse is an endurance multi-sport challenge that simulates the life journey of salmon. Soloists, tandem and relay teams compete in a 6-leg course that demonstrates the urban and natural challenges that salmon face in their journey.

The Traverse raises funds and awareness for local environmental groups, such as Whatcom Land Trust, that are working to minimize the impact humans place on the Earth and consequently the salmon. Participants raise a minimum entry fee of \$75 through pledges and 3/4 of the value of those pledges are donated directly to the environmental group of their choosing.

Whatcom Land Trust was the environmental group chosen by over ten teams which raised thousands of dollars. Two of those teams were put together by WLT to support our mission to preserve farms, forests, and parklands for future generations.

Francie Gass and J. Gordon started the race running 6 miles from downtown Bellingham to Lake Padden. After their grueling uphill run, they passed off to mountain bikers Christina Maginnes and Katie Knight who rode for 6-miles through technical single-track surrounding Lake Padden. Krista Gordon and Craig Funston took the baton from there, riding road bikes for 16 miles to Lake Sammish and back to Arroyo Park where they passed off to trail runners Joe Peabody and Andrea Hood. Joe and Andrea ran the interurban trail for 3 miles down to Marine Park, where Chris Moench and Michael Durbin took off in a double kayak to Chuckanut Rocks and back. The final trek involved all ten teammates running, jogging, walking, and laughing all the way to Boundary Bay Brewery.

The WLT teams were in great spirits when they found out they were not the last team to cross the finish line. This called for celebration including high-fives, hugs, and beers at



group photos courtesy of Ashley Gianinetti

Our Traverse teams: "Land Pres" and "Wonders of Water." Standing (left to right) Andrea Hood, Krista Gordon, Christina Maginnis, J. Gordon, Craig Funston, Katie Knight, Joe Peabody, Francie Gass, Sitting: Chris Moench and Michael Durbin



Boundary. Over \$600 from their pledges will go directly to Whatcom Land Trust. Thank you to the teams for making this a fun day!

Thank you to all who donated their pledges to support WLT teams including: race participants, friends and family, and the American Alpine Institute. A special thanks goes to Traverse organizers for making this happen and including Whatcom Land Trust. They tell us Whatcom Land

Trust will be receiving about \$4,000 from pledges. We look forward to next year!

- Katie Knight



Michael Durbin, Chris Moench and Barbie.

photo: Katie Knight

Our Cycle Adventure for Whatcom Land Trust

My wife Stacie and I have been riding tandem for about 14 years. We have enjoyed numerous overnight tours, cross state tours and an eleven day journey from Astoria, Oregon to San Francisco, California. Over the last couple of years, since our trip to San Francisco, we have yearned for a bicycle tour that would be long enough to separate ourselves mentally and emotionally from our daily tasks and stresses. We were looking for a trip that would require physical fitness, develop a sense of material simplicity and allow our cycling to evolve into a rhythm of daily mileage consumption. A cross country tour fit the bill.

We are both fortunate enough to have employers that were very receptive to the idea of our trip, this isn't to say that there wasn't much to work out with our places of work, but to our surprise, it did work out!

We searched routes across the United States that varied from a southern crossing that would be as short as 3000 miles to the longer northern route that was closer to 4000 miles. We had spoken to many cyclists who had done cross country tours and researched maps and internet sites in order to develop a route that could accommodate our six to seven week schedule. Because of our home location here in Bellingham, it was a natural choice to do a northern route from coast to coast from Neah Bay, Washington to Bar Harbor, Maine.

Our daughters were gracious enough to drive us to Neah Bay for the first of three legs of our journey, Neah Bay to Bellingham over three days. The weather began wet and cool but later in the ride and further inland it became warm and dry. Our second leg began the next weekend, riding from Bellingham to Twisp, Washington over the North Cascade Highway. This was one wet ride, with continual down pour for the two days of the crossing. We returned to Bellingham by car in order to work the following week then drove back to Twisp to begin the third and final leg of the trip, Twisp to Bar Harbor.

From Twisp, we left early on a beautiful, crisp, clear morning, beginning a series of very strenuous days comprising of two major pass climbs per day for two consecutive days. The temperatures were hot to very hot with the intake of fluids being a priority, reminding each other to drink as the days progressed. In this heat, the purchase of bags of ice became a recurrent pleasure throughout the trip, driving our body temperatures down to a degree we could tolerate.

We had always believed this trip would be strenuous and difficult; it was both of these but was also relaxing and simple. The major concerns of the day were food, water and shelter.

We rose from our beds early most every morning, hoping to be on the bike in time to get miles in prior to the heat of the day. The early morning scenes that were displayed before us day after day were spiritual. We were exposed to the majesty of Glacier National Park to the homespun magnificence of the western plains of Montana and the Dakotas to the awe-some grandeur of the Great Lakes. The senses of sight, smell and sound were continually bombarded with the natural beauty of this country. The friendliness and helpfulness of its people was an inspiration that will not soon be forgotten.

Stacie and I have experienced an adventure that will be hard to duplicate. We are thankful to all who aided us at home and across the country. We are thankful to our daughters for their support. We are thankful to the Whatcom Land Trust to allow us to develop the trip as a fund raiser. But most of all we are thankful to be able to return home to the most beautiful place of all, Whatcom County.



photo courtesy of John Matthews

On the road with Stacie and John Matthews.

— John Matthews

Volunteer Opportunity in Land Management

We are looking for one or two long-term volunteers to work with our conservation staff and board members in maintaining the properties we own. The task includes completing a management inventory of the thirty-eight properties. This would involve visiting each property to assess the kinds of management the Land Trust should do. Many will not require any attention beyond an annual monitoring visit. Some will need attention: Fences,

gates or signage installed or trash removed for example. The volunteers will then help to identify the top priority projects and undertake their completion through organizing volunteer work parties. This is a real need of the Land Trust that requires volunteers willing to commit at least several hours each week over several years. The goal is to establish a systematic and reliable task force to assure that our beautiful conservation lands are maintained in



the best ecological health possible. For further information please contact board member Chris Moench, 734-9472, dancingdog@nas.com.

ConocoPhillips Donates Funding for Canyon Lake Creek Bridge

A \$15,000 donation from ConocoPhillips will support bridge construction in the Canyon Lake Creek Community Forest, jointly managed by Western Washington University, Whatcom County Parks and Recreation Department, and the Whatcom Land Trust.

Bridge construction is estimated to

begin in summer 2004. Six miles of trails currently wind through the forest that includes 700 acres of old growth trees, a 40-acre lake and five streams.

Whatcom Land Trust led preservation efforts in 1992 when a business began plans to log the area. Forestry experts estimated its trees were between 800- and 1,000 years old. The trees were saplings

at the time of the Crusades and mature when Columbus sailed to this continent.

The Paul G. Allen Forest Protection Foundation, an anonymous donor, Whatcom County Council and private donations provided the \$3.6 million to purchase the 2,300-acre site. The Canyon Creek Community Forest opened to the public in 1999.

Annual Picnic Festivities

On Sunday, September 28, WLT staff, board members and friends met for our annual picnic, held at Hovander Park in Ferndale. Bob Klein was unanimously elected to grill the salmon again this year. Joe's Garden provided corn on the cob, and everyone went all out providing delicious

side dishes and sumptuous desserts. Flip Breskin got everyone involved with songs. Ed Stone and Michelle Schraeder, long time Land Trust supporters and easement donors, were given the Land Steward of the Year award. Roger DeSpain was given the Distinguished Conservator award for his support of WLT while Director of Whatcom County Parks, a position he retired from earlier this year.

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We will miss Mike Ryan on the Board

We deeply regret the resignation of Michael Ryan and offer him our heartfelt gratitude for his invaluable service to the Board and its Development Committee over the past five years. During a critical period when the amount and complexity of WLT finances increased by orders of magnitude, Mike provided essential fiscal direction and leadership to the organization. Through his efforts we have created an investment program, enlisted sound external oversight, modernized our accounting procedures and retained an excellent bookkeeper. Mike also encouraged our first CPA to join

the Board. Mike actively supported our Development Director while bringing valuable business perspectives to bear on WLT operations, fundraising, and conservation programs. Waycross Investment, his firm, was one of our first Business Partners. He always added a diversity of viewpoint, voice and vision essential to any healthy organization.

We anticipate that Mike Ryan will continue to collaborate with the Whatcom Land Trust in the future, for which we remain most grateful.

—Whatcom Land Trust Board of Directors

Great Outdoors Auction A "Wild" Success

Thank you to everyone who made our 3rd annual fundraising auction a great success. It was the combined efforts of donors, guests and volunteers that made it such a spectacular event! We auctioned off over 200 unique items and rose over \$45,000. Perhaps the greatest benefit for the Whatcom Land Trust was the chance to gather 300 of our best supporters in one place for a marvelous evening of fun *fund raising!* **Hold the date:** Our 4th annual Great Outdoors Auction will be held on **Saturday May 15, 2004** at Mount Baker's White Salmon Lodge.

Final Tour—November 15

We have had an overwhelming response to this year's tours, with many of them filled well in advance. Our last tour of the year will be Ann Eissinger's slide presentation and walk around the BP Heron reserve, scheduled for Saturday, November 15th at 1:00 p.m. Please call the office at 650-9470 to register and to get directions.

This summer two of the tours to Canyon Lake Creek Community Forest had to be cancelled when the road to the area closed because of the high fire danger. The road was reopened September 15, and we are working on rescheduling the tours this fall. **Note: both tours were full, with waiting lists, so we are not taking additional registrations for these tours.**

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Join Us for the Dedication Stimpson Nature Reserve Opens



photo: Rand Jack

Three generations of Stimpsons on the new Stimpson Family Nature Reserve trail. (left to right) Sisters Jané Bremner and Susan Trimmingham, Maya Seckinger, granddaughter of sister Mary Rivkin (not pictured), Zo and Sophie Dixon, granddaughters of Susan, and Erin Trimmingham, Susan's daughter.

At 11 o'clock on October 11th three generations of Stimpsons will gather to help dedicate the Stimpson Family Nature Reserve, a timeless public treasure made possible by the Stimpson family. In the fall of 2000, seven Stimpson siblings donated 116 beautiful acres in the Lake Whatcom Watershed to the Whatcom Land Trust. This act of generosity became the catalyst for a community partnership that created the Stimpson Family Nature Reserve — a partnership of the Stimpson family, the Whatcom Land Trust, Whatcom County, Western

continued on front cover